DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
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RELEASABLE

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QUESTION

What is Saudi Arabia's manpower capacity to absorb high technology systems without additional requirements for US technicians? How many US military and civilian personnel are now stationed in Saudi Arabia in connection with previous sales of US military hardware to that country? How many additional US military and civilian personnel will be required to be stationed in Saudi Arabia if the entire package (the AWACS, F-15 enhancement, and KC-135 tankers) is approved?

RESPONSE

The Saudi Arabia manpower situation is vastly different than that of Iran. Iran had the population base to plan for eventual self-sufficiency in the operation and maintenance of its weapons systems. This is not the case in Saudi Arabia. With the limited population base in Saudi Arabia, some significant contingent of US contractor personnel will be required to remain in-country for the foreseeable future. This is not to imply that Saudi Arabia cannot absorb the high technology systems such as the F-15 and AWACS aircraft. The Saudi's have demonstrated their ability to absorb and operate the British Lightning fighter aircraft, the F-5E, the C-130, and other systems that are currently in use. Contractor support, however, is being used to augment and support the Saudi maintenance capabilities of these systems.

There are approximately 3,200 US military and civilian personnel now stationed in Saudi Arabia in support of the US mission there. It is estimated that approximately 600-700 additional US military and civilian personnel will be employed to support functions of the AWACS and tanker aircraft plus the additional

enhancements to the F-15 aircraft and improved AIM-9L missile. It should be emphasized that the F-15 enhancements and AIM-9L missile will not significantly increase the manpower over that identified to support the basic F-15 aircraft and AIM-9 series missiles. This number is based on the maximum predicted (i.e., a shap shot representation at the peak period) and is expected to be gradually phased down as Saudi personnel are qualified on the systems. As stated, however, some contractor support will remain for the foreseeable future.